

Mr. John M. West  
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Chairman Hartley and Committee Members,

My Name is John West from Southington, Connecticut. I am an Amateur Radio operator Federally licensed by the Federal Communications Commission; my federally issued call sign is N1IWT. The license grant is for both fixed station operation and mobile operation. I am in my 21<sup>st</sup> year of licensure.

(This testimony is as an independent individual and not to be construed as part of any organization. I am the Publicity Manager of the TIPSnet, the Training, Information and Public Service Network, a weekly regional informational meeting on the air.)

That said I would like to enter this testimony in favor of Senate Bill No. 61 that will hopefully end confusion over mobile operation of Amateur Radio equipment in Connecticut. I thank Senator Guglielmo for sponsoring this Bill.

The thrust of this Bill is simply to clarify a divide that is being found in part of Connecticut's Law Enforcement community. In Connecticut, Amateur Radio operators have always been accorded the privilege to operate mobile in accordance with the rights and privileges of the Federal license grant they hold.

Simply, once the cell phone and distracted driving bill was enacted ham operators were inadvertently put into limbo. If a properly licensed ham operator were stopped for operation while driving many individual law enforcement officers would give a ticket for doing what the ham radio operator was properly licensed for, or worse would say 'oh well it looks like a cell phone' so it can't be used. Other towns there were never problems or questions. The problem is it is not evenly enforced

During preparation for a TIPSnet program on the subject last spring, a couple of participants decided to contact anonymously a group of police departments including the Connecticut State Police, all at random, anyone who answered the call. This way it was figured we'd get the fairest sample.

The results of the 10 called – 5 would issue a ticket without room for discussion, 5 would not, or would release someone upon presentation of proof of licensure. This indicates if at nothing else, a need for education to laws and traditions currently on the books. After this sample the question was even larger – no one seemed to know the answer.

My personal hope is two-fold –

- 1.) I'd like to call for uniformity, this bill SB No. 61 simply says we can do what we have always done but never had been deduced to writing. I think this will make it easier for Law Enforcement to properly enforce the current law.
- 2.) Secondly, it could be set up for hams to avail themselves to using the State DMV-issued license plates signifying they are ham operators and they have been available for decades. This would identify them immediately as Hams so there was no question.

Hams are known for their operation in public emergencies such as Tropical Storm Irene and Winter Storm Alfred, or as we say "When All Else Fails, Amateur Radio", whether an organized effort such as the Amateur Radio Emergency Service, (ARES ®) organization, ran by the ARRL the National Organization for Amateur Radio, based in Newington CT, or individual hams just trying to lend a hand.

Allowing proper mobile operation whether via hand-held radio, or fixed mobile installation, or even more sophisticated digital modes, allows for the training for public safety events i.e.; parades, bicycle or motorcycle benefit rides, etc or use in an emergency.

Members of our Amateur Radio community are not trying to usurp the intent of the laws on the book that are there to keep the roads safe, we are only trying to restore confidence in a group that lends a hand when needed many times when casually driving along the road.

We are all taking about proper safe legal operation nothing to change the original intent of the original bill in question. This is just a technical change to increase uniformity in enforcement.

Thank you for your consideration.

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